

Federal Acquisition Regulation

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contract file. Award by acceptance of a bid on the award portion of SF 1447 incorporates the representations, certifications, and other statements of bidders in the resultant contract even though not physically attached.

[54 FR 48983, Nov. 28, 1989, as amended at 56 FR 41733, Aug. 22, 1991]

14.202 General rules for solicitation of bids.

14.202-1 Bidding time.

(a) *Policy.* A reasonable time for prospective bidders to prepare and submit bids shall be allowed in all invitations, consistent with the needs of the Government. (For construction contracts, see 36.213-3(a).) A bidding time (i.e., the time between issuance of the solicitation and opening of bids) of at least 30 calendar days shall be provided when synopsis is required by subpart 5.2.

(b) *Factors to be considered.* Because of unduly limited bidding time, some potential sources may be precluded from bidding and others may be forced to include amounts for contingencies that, with additional time, could be eliminated. To avoid unduly restricting competition or paying higher-than-necessary prices, consideration shall be given to such factors as the following in establishing a reasonable bidding time: (1) degree of urgency; (2) complexity of requirement; (3) anticipated extent of subcontracting; (4) whether use was made of presolicitation notices; (5) geographic distribution of bidders; and (6) normal transmittal time for both invitations and bids.

[48 FR 42171, Sept. 19, 1983, as amended at 50 FR 1738, Jan. 11, 1985; 50 FR 52429, Dec. 23, 1985; 60 FR 34737, July 3, 1995; 62 FR 272, Jan. 2, 1997]

14.202-2 Telegraphic bids.

(a) Telegraphic bids and mailgrams shall be authorized only when—

(1) The date for the opening of bids will not allow bidders sufficient time to submit bids in the prescribed format; or

(2) Prices are subject to frequent changes.

(b) If telegraphic bids are to be authorized, see 14.201-6(g). Unauthorized

telegraphic bids shall not be considered (see 14.301(b)).

[48 FR 42171, Sept. 19, 1983, as amended at 60 FR 34737, July 3, 1995]

14.202-3 Bid envelopes.

(a) Postage or envelopes bearing *Postage and Fees Paid* indicia shall not be distributed with the invitation for bids or otherwise supplied to prospective bidders.

(b) To provide for ready identification and proper handling of bids, Optional Form 17, Offer Label, may be furnished with each bid set. The form may be obtained from the General Services Administration (see 53.107).

[48 FR 42171, Sept. 19, 1983, as amended at 59 FR 67033, Dec. 28, 1994]

14.202-4 Bid samples.

(a) *Policy.* (1) Bidders shall not be required to furnish bid samples unless there are characteristics of the product that cannot be described adequately in the specification or purchase description.

(2) Bid samples will be used only to determine the responsiveness of the bid and will not be used to determine a bidder's ability to produce the required items.

(3) Bid samples may be examined for any required characteristic, whether or not such characteristic is adequately described in the specification, if listed in accordance with subdivision (e)(1)(ii) below.

(4) Bids will be rejected as nonresponsive if the sample fails to conform to each of the characteristics listed in the invitation.

(b) *When to use.* The use of bid samples would be appropriate for products that must be suitable from the standpoint of balance, facility of use, general "feel," color, pattern, or other characteristics that cannot be described adequately in the specification. However, when more than a minor portion of the characteristics of the product cannot be adequately described in the specification, products should be acquired by two-step sealed bidding or negotiation, as appropriate.

(c) *Justification.* The reasons why acceptable products cannot be acquired without the submission of bid samples

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shall be set forth in the contract file, except where the submission is required by the formal specifications (Federal, Military, or other) applicable to the acquisition.

(d) *Requirements for samples in invitations for bids.* (1) Invitations for bids shall—

(i) State the number and, if appropriate, the size of the samples to be submitted and otherwise fully describe the samples required; and

(ii) List all the characteristics for which the samples will be examined.

(2) If bid samples are required, see 14.201-6(o).

(e) *Waiver of requirement for bid samples.* (1) The requirement for furnishing bid samples may be waived when a bidder offers a product previously or currently being contracted for or tested by the Government and found to comply with specification requirements conforming in every material respect with those in the current invitation for bids. When the requirement may be waived, see 14.201-6(o)(2).

(2) Where samples required by a Federal, Military, or other formal specification are not considered necessary and a waiver of the sample requirements of the specification has been authorized, a statement shall be included in the invitation that notwithstanding the requirements of the specification, samples will not be required.

(f) *Unsolicited samples.* Bid samples furnished with a bid that are not required by the invitation generally will not be considered as qualifying the bid and will be disregarded. However, the bid sample will not be disregarded if it is clear from the bid or accompanying papers that the bidder's intention was to qualify the bid. (See 14.404-2(d) if the qualification does not conform to the solicitation.)

(g) *Handling bid samples.* (1) Samples that are not destroyed in testing shall be returned to bidders at their request and expense, unless otherwise specified in the invitation.

(2) Disposition instructions shall be requested from bidders and samples disposed of accordingly.

(3) Samples ordinarily will be returned collect to the address from which received if disposition instructions are not received within 30 days.

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Small items may be returned by mail, postage prepaid.

(4) Samples that are to be retained for inspection purposes in connection with deliveries shall be transmitted to the inspecting activity concerned, with instructions to retain the sample until completion of the contract or until disposition instructions are furnished.

(5) Where samples are consumed or their usefulness is impaired by tests, they will be disposed of as scrap unless the bidder requests their return.

[48 FR 42171, Sept. 19, 1983, as amended at 50 FR 1738, Jan. 11, 1985; 50 FR 52429, Dec. 23, 1985; 67 FR 13055, Mar. 20, 2002]

14.202-5 Descriptive literature.

(a) *Policy.* Contracting officers must not require bidders to furnish descriptive literature unless it is needed before award to determine whether the products offered meet the specification and to establish exactly what the bidder proposes to furnish.

(b) *Justification.* The contracting officer must document in the contract file the reasons why product acceptability cannot be determined without the submission of descriptive literature, except when the contract specifications require submission.

(c) *Requirements of invitation for bids.*

(1) The invitation must clearly state—

(i) What descriptive literature the bidders must furnish;

(ii) The purpose for requiring the literature;

(iii) The extent of its consideration in the evaluation of bids; and

(iv) The rules that will apply if a bidder fails to furnish the literature before bid opening or if the literature provided does not comply with the requirements of the invitation.

(2) If bidders must furnish descriptive literature, see 14.201-6(p).

(d) *Waiver of requirement for descriptive literature.* (1) The contracting officer may waive the requirement for descriptive literature if—

(i) The bidder states in the bid that the product being offered is the same as a product previously or currently being furnished to the contracting activity; and

(ii) The contracting officer determines that the product offered by the bidder complies with the specification